

Message Text

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R 111839Z MAR 77
FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3240
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 3261
AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 EC BRUSSELS 02399

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EEC, FR
SUBJECT: FRENCH POLICY TOWARD EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES ENLARGEMENT

1. SUMMARY: MARCH 10 LE MONDE REPORTS THAT WHILE IN BRUSSELS FOR MARCH 8 EC COUNCIL MEETING, FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD INDICATED THAT FRANCE NOW PREFERS THAT EC ACCES- SION NEGOTIATIONS WITH GREECE, PORTUGAL AND SPAIN BE HANDLED IN TANDEM, AND INFERS THAT THE FACT THAT EC-GREECE NEGOTIA- TIONS ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT GREECE WILL BECOME A MEMBER BEFORE THE OTHERS. LE MONDE OF MARCH 11 EDITORIALIZES THAT GOF POLICY FAVORS "GLOBALIZING" THESE VARIOUS ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS AND PROCEEDING CAUTIOUSLY WITH THEM. AN OFFICIAL IN THE FRENCH PERMANENT DELEGATION TO THE EC SAYS THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN FRENCH POLICY, WHICH HAS CONSISTENTLY HELD THAT THE COMMUNITY SHOULD TAKE A SERIOUS LOOK AT THE IMPLICATIONS OF ENLARGEMENT FOR COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS, THAT THE PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY COMMUNITY AGRICULTURAL REFORMS, AND THAT IN NEGOTIATING WITH THE GREEKS REGARDING AGRICULTURE THE COMMUNITY MUST ENSURE THAT IT SETS NO UNDESIRABLE PRECEDENTS
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FOR THE PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS. HE ALSO SAID THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE GOF POSITION THAT EC NEGOTIATIONS WITH GREECE SHOULD BE PRESSED TOWARD AN EARLY CONCLUSION. END SUMMARY.

2. LE MONDE MARCH 10 CARRIES BRUSSELS DATED LINED ARTICLE SAYING FRENCH POLICY TOWARD ENLARGEMENT OF

EC TO INCLUDE GREECE, PORTUGAL AND SPAIN, HAS RECENTLY CHANGED FROM ONE ACCEPTING THE PREMISE THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH ONE ASPIRANT COUNTRY WILL PROCEED MORE OR LESS INDEPENDENTLY OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE OTHERS, TO THE BELIEF THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ALL SHOULD BE MESHED AND THAT EACH OF THE ASPIRANTS SHOULD BE TREATED IDENTICALLY. ARTICLE, AT LEAST PARTLY BASED ON BRIEFING BY FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD WHEN HE WAS IN BRUSSELS FOR MARCH 8 EC COUNCIL MEETING, INFERS THAT THIS MEANS CURRENT GREEK NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE SLOWED AND THAT GREECE MAY NOT BECOME AN EC MEMBER BEFORE PORTUGAL AND SPAIN.

3. THE ARTICLE SUMMARIZES CURRENT GOF THINKING AS FOLLOWS:

(A) FOR POLITICAL REASONS FRANCE FAVORS EC ACCESSION OF GREECE AND PORTUGAL, AND ALSO THAT OF A DEMOCRATIC SPAIN SHOULD IT APPLY.

(B) ACCESSION MUST BE ECONOMICALLY PLAUSIBLE, WITHOUT RISKING MAJOR DAMAGE TO EITHER THE CANDIDATE COUNTRIES OR TO COMMUNITY COHESION. IT IS NECESSARY TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE LARGE ECONOMIC GAP BETWEEN EC AND ASPIRANT COUNTRIES.

(C) EC COMMISSION AND COUNCIL MUST LOOK FOR WAYS TO ASSIST THE CONVERGENCE OF MEMBER COUNTRIES' AND
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ASPIRANTS' ECONOMIES BETWEEN NOW AND ACCESSION. THIS MIGHT INCLUDE SUBSTANTIAL COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

(D) BEFORE AGREEING TO ACCESSIONS, EC MEMBER GOVERNMENTS MUST TAKE A NEW LOOK AT COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED FOR A COMMUNITY OF SIX MEMBERS.

(E) ASPIRANT COUNTRIES SHOULD ATTAIN FULL MEMBERSHIP ONLY WHEN THEY HAVE REACHED A LEVEL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WHERE THEY CAN FULLY APPLY COMMUNITY REGULATIONS.

3. IN COMMENTING TO MISSION OFFICER MARCH 10 ON LE MONDE ARTICLE, COUNSELOR AT FRENCH PERM DEL WHO WORKS ON SOUTHERN EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN SAID HE IS AWARE OF NO CHANGE IN FRENCH POLICY, WHICH HE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS: (A) FOR POLITICAL REASONS GOF WILL AGREE TO ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS WITH DEMOCRATIC

ASPIRANT COUNTRIES; (B) GOF HAS CONSISTENTLY WARNED EC PARTNERS THAT VARIOUS UPCOMING ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY SOME OVERHAUL OF COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS, THAT EC AND ASPIRANT COUNTRIES SHOULD ENDEAVOR TO BRING CLOSER CONVERGENCE OF MEMBER STATE AND ASPIRANT COUNTRIES' ECONOMIES PRIOR TO FULL MEMBERSHIP, AND THAT FRANCE WILL INSIST PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS (PARTICULARLY SPANISH) BE ACCOMPANIED BY REFORM OF EC AGRICULTURAL POLICIES. (C) GREEK ACCESSION TALKS SHOULD MOVE STEADILY TOWARD CONCLUSION, BUT WITH THE CAVEAT THAT THE COMMUNITY SHOULD MAKE NO CONCESSIONS TO GREECE IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR WHICH MIGHT CREATE UNDESIRABLE PRECEDENTS FOR THE PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH ACCESSION TALKS.

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4. CHAIRMAN OF COREPER'S MEDITERRANEAN WORKING GROUP TOLD MISSION OFFICER SHE HAS TO DATE SENSED NO FRENCH ATTEMPT TO SLOW GREEK NEGOTIATIONS, BUT NOTED WRYLY THAT GREEKS WILL DOUBTLESS SEEK NEW REASSURANCES FOLLOWING APPEARANCE OF LE MONDE PIECE. SHE ALSO NOTED THAT WHILE ALL EC MEMBER COUNTRIES SEEM TO BELIEVE THAT GREEK ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD NOT BE DELAYED PENDING PORTUGUESE/SPANISH ACCESSION APPLICATIONS, THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT COMMUNITY SHOULD NOT MAKE CONCESSIONS TO GREECE IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR WHICH IT CANNOT LIVE WITH IN CASES OF PORTUGAL AND GREECE. DANISH COUNSELOR WHO IS ON WORKING GROUP TOLD US HIS AUTHORITIES

FOUND DE GUIRINGAUD'S REMARKS TO EC COUNCIL'S
MARCH 8 RESTRICTED SESSION ON PORTUGUESE APPLICATION
TO BE "MORE IN LINE WITH WHAT THE OTHER EIGHT COUN-
TRIES HAVE BEEN SAYING THAN HERETOFORE."

5. COMMENT. THOSE VIEWS ATTRIBUTED TO DE GUIRIN-
GAUD AND THE GOF BY LE MONDE IN PARA (2) (A-D) ABOVE
SEEM VERY SIMILAR TO THE COMMON LINE TOWARD THE UP-
COMING PORTUGUESE APPLICATION ADOPTED BY EC COUNCIL
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FEBRUARY 8. THE POINT CONTAINED IN PARA 2-E, IF IT
IS INDEED FRENCH POLICY, IS DOUBTLESS CONSIDERED A
DESIREABLE GOAL BY ALL EC MEMBERS, BUT PROBABLY
SEEMS AN UNREALISTIC EXPECTATION TO SOME. WE DO NOT
KNOW WHETHER DE GUIRINGAUD SAID ANYTHING SPECIFIC
TO THE FRENCH PRESS ABOUT THE GREEK NEGOTIATIONS, OR
WHETHER LE MONDE'S INFERENCE THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS
AND SUBSEQUENT GREEK MEMBERSHIP MIGHT BE SLOWED IS
SIMPLY A JOURNALIST'S EXTRAPOLATION FROM WHAT THE
FOREIGN MINISTER SAID ABOUT ENLARGEMENT IN A MORE
GENERAL, PHILOSOPHICAL SENSE. HOWEVER, LE MONDE EDITORIAL OF
MARCH 11 RETURNS TO SUBJECT, REPORTING THAT QUAI
D'ORSAY, WHICH LAST YEAR WELCOMED GREEK ACCESSION
AND THE SHIFTING OF THE EC BALANCE A BIT SOUTHWARD,
NOW VIEWS THE ENLARGEMENT QUESTION WITH CAUTION.
IT MAY BE THAT A SIGNIFICANT SHIFT IN FRENCH POLICIES
IS IN FACT UNDERWAY. PERHAPS EMBASSY PARIS COULD
COMMENT. HINTON

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